This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-6 (canceled).

Claim 7 (currently amended): A node in an MTP network for providing enhanced links, ~~for transferring short messages and long messages which are longer than that supported by current MTP level 2 and up to a maximum length supported by SSCOP, the node~~ comprising:

a first destination point code assigned to said node for connecting to a first link for supporting short messages, wherein said short messages have a message length that is supported by a MTP level 2 signaling link; and

a second destination point code assigned to said node for connecting to a second link for supporting long messages, wherein said long messages have a message length that exceeds a length supported by the MTP level 2 signaling link, and wherein said long messages have a maximum length that is supported by SSCOP,

wherein both the first and second destination point codes are part of the same MTP network.

Claim 8 (previously presented): A node as claimed in claim 7, further comprising MTP routing tables supporting the enhanced links, wherein the routing tables are structured such that routing between nodes with the second destination point code uses only the enhanced links.

Claim 9 (previously presented): A node as claimed in claim 7, further comprising SCCP translation functions supporting the enhanced links, the SCCP translation functions being engineered such that primary translation is to be logical destinations reachable via the enhanced links and backup translation is to be logical destinations reachable via links based on MTP level 2 if translation results in a physical destination located in a node supporting the enhanced links.

Claim 10 (currently amended): A node in an MTP network for providing enhanced links, ~~transferring short messages and long messages which are longer than that supported by current MTP level 2 and up to a maximum length supported by SSCOP, the node~~ comprising:

a first destination point code assigned to said node for connecting to a first link for supporting short messages, wherein said short messages have a message length that is supported by a MTP level 2 signaling link; and

a second destination point code assigned to said node for connecting to a second link for supporting the long messages, wherein said long messages have a message length that exceeds a length supported by the MTP level 2 signaling link, and wherein said long messages have a maximum length that is supported by SSCOP,

wherein both the first and second point codes are part of different MTP networks.

Claim 11 (previously presented): A node as claimed in claim 10, further comprising MTP routing tables supporting the enhanced links, wherein the routing tables are structured such that routing between nodes with the second destination point code uses only the enhanced links.

Claim 12 (previously presented): A node as claimed in claim 10, further comprising SCCP translation functions supporting the enhanced links, the SCCP translation functions being engineered such that primary translation is to be logical destinations reachable via the enhanced links and backup translation is to be logical destinations reachable via links based on MTP level 2 if translation results in a physical destination located in a node supporting the enhanced links.